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equally great and satisfying. No other public health service is entitled to greater remuneration, for the work is not without danger, and I think it is generally recognized that the highest compensation is given to nurses highly trained in this class of work.

But there are other compensations besides that of the coin of the realm, and one of these is the satisfaction of a noble service performed and a task accomplished; for we cannot measure in symbols of the dollar, the exaltation of spirit and the approval of conscience that comes to the persons who have been faithful to their trust; and who have in a full measure given of their life's best service to the end that others might live.

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## INDUSTRIAL WELFARE NURSING<sup>1</sup>

BY FRANCES MCGEE, R.N.

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The nurse in the industrial field is so new and is capable of so much development that the boundaries of her field are changing daily. Progressive firms are employing nurses daily to develop new lines of work.

In former times, when a large force of employes was the exception, the employer could easily keep in touch with his men and know them well enough to find out when there was distress in any family or disagreement in the plant. With the expansion of firms, more highly specialized lines of employment, larger numbers of employes, etc., such a condition became physically impossible, the employer still retained his interest, but the employe found he was only a cog in a very large wheel.

In many plants a first-aid room, or corner of a room, was in charge of an employe appointed for the purpose of attending to injuries occurring in the plant. It was, and is, unjust to expect a mechanic to use the technique that a nurse spends years to acquire, and seldom or never does he possess the tact or diplomacy necessary in these positions. Because of the location of the department, the idea of putting a nurse in charge seemed absurd. Besides, what nurse, in a nice white uniform, would care to work with greasy mechanics? So, since the nurse could not go there, a first-aid room was established. In many plants it was a part of the main office, but in many cases a separate building was erected.

<sup>1</sup> Read at a meeting of the Indiana State Nurses' Association.

Because of the very nature of our work, the latter is the ideal arrangement. People will run in and out of the main building and who wants everyone to know all his little accidents or stand around when he is trying to tell his troubles? Then, too, the importance of a proper place for supplies, records, etc., easily accessible when needed, should never be underestimated either by the firm or by the nurse.

With the adoption of the workmen's compensation laws, with the consequent liability of employer, and, sad to say, dishonesty on the part of many employes, it becomes especially necessary to secure and keep accurate records.

If you merely say in your report that John Smith hurt his foot, when it becomes necessary, two months later, to amputate John Smith's foot from some other cause, you will be placed in a sad position if he cares to say he was hurt there and the amputation was a result of the former injury. John Smith's injury must be described, whether right or left foot, toe, ankle, heel, kind of wound, and to avoid contingencies, note whether any previous injury has occurred. Most concerns require the reporting of every injury, no matter how trivial, since the small neglected wound of to-day may be the serious infected wound of to-morrow. Cases of infection do not recover without the loss of some time and since compensation is not paid until the third week, it is usually the employes' time. However, the employer has the anxiety, expensive dressings and loss of production while the man is idle. The completion of contracts depends upon the men who can be counted upon every day, and unless contracts can be completed, you have a financial loss as well as loss of continuity of service.

From the employe's standpoint the establishment of nursing service means much. They resent going for dressings to a man, who knows no more than they do. Men can seldom do the dressings without attempting some joke, to brace the patient up, I suppose, and the injured one feels that his injuries are taken lightly. So he doesn't return until infection sets in, and forces him to the doctor's office.

My accident reports always exceed the number reported by the foreman. Dangerous conditions in shops (all of which we remedy at once), the advisability of moving, changes of food for the baby, diet lists for the invalid; reports of destitute families in the neighborhood, and every one of the happier occasions,—weddings, births, christenings, promotions—are to be commented on by the nurse.

One case I have in mind—the man came for advice as to the proper way to treat rheumatism. The patient was his wife, the children cared for her during the day, and he took care of her at

night. Bed sores had developed, suffering could be endured in silence no longer, so to the nurse he came. Inquiry developed the fact that they had a right to the Metropolitan nursing service. The nurse was sent daily. A wheeled chair was procured, the bed sores healed, the chair is the day bed, and when night comes everyone can sleep and mother is recovering. That family not only thanks the nurse, but the man will be a powerful influence for good in any troubles involving the firm when one man's opinion may sway the crowd.

We use only the simplest dressings and teach cleanliness. Our only antiseptic is iodine, since we wish to teach the importance of clean dressings, rather than drugs.

The simple process of reasoning leads a man to think that if cleanliness is good for wounds it is also good for his family and home. If the nurse spends so much time cleaning, then his wife should do so also, if he is to live comfortably.

Perhaps more effective than twenty talks on hygiene is the fear that the nurse will see the soiled underwear, or hose, so more than ordinary cleanliness must be observed.

An industrial nurse must possess the social spirit. The purely professional nurse cannot succeed, since the men will not return if coldly received. It is a disappointment to him to return many times, to find himself greeted with the same cool, courteous manner, especially if she fails to remember even his name; then the tragedy is complete.

To the firm industrial nursing offers a lower insurance rate, continuity of service, contentment, loyalty, the personal feeling that something worth while has been accomplished. To the nurse it brings freedom from the depressing hours in the sick room atmosphere, regular hours and meals, nights of sleep, all the holidays, and the splendid feeling that she has a place where she is wanted all the time, that her family needs and wants her. Should one be ill or in trouble, it is pleasant to feel that 900 or 1,200 men will help one all they can. To the men, the industrial nurse is a friend in need, a confidant, a helper, and interpreter,—altogether a splendid thing to have around the shop.